

VZCZCXRO7776
RR RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHUP #0636 2461311
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 031311Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4458
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

UNCLAS BUDAPEST 000636

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EEB/TPP/ABT AND EUR/ERA
STATE PLEASE PASS TO USTR AND USDA/FAS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [EUN](#) [TBIO](#) [HU](#)
SUBJECT: ANTI GMO, BUT NO COMMENT: HUNGARY'S REPLY TO
DEMARCHÉ ON SOY ISSUE AT SEPTEMBER 7 EU AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
MEETING

REF: STATE 86566

1. (SBU) Embassy's Commercial Section chief delivered demarche points on September 1 to Dr. Laszlo Vajda, head of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development's Department of EU Coordination and International Relations. Vajda is also Hungary's spokesperson for the Special Agricultural Committee in Brussels. Vajda initially stated that it was "almost certain" Hungary would not comment on this issue at the September 7 ministerial meeting, but then rephrased his answer to "unlikely to comment." He did however affirm Hungary's negative position in regard to genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and its overall support for zero tolerance. He stated that the issue is economically, politically, and socially complex, and that Hungary's basic economic interests are supported by maintaining a GMO free market (noting that Hungary exports approximately 3 million tons of feed annually within the EU).

2. (SBU) Econoff separately delivered demarche points on September 2 to Dr. Gabor Nagy, head of the Foreign Ministry's EU Trade and Sectoral Policies Department. Nagy stated that while consumers and producers stand firmly against all GMO products for human consumption, Hungary does not currently have an official position for the September 7 meeting. Nagy elaborated that the Hungarian livestock industry already uses some European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) approved GMO-based soy animal feed, and that this adds a layer of complexity to the issue. Nagy stated that a position could however emerge at the last minute, following a September 4 ministerial meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture.

3. (SBU) COMMENT: Dr. Vajda appears to have the lead on this issue, and his statements minimize the possibility of Hungary commenting on September 7. Hungary sitting this one out may be the best outcome for us, as their strong opposition to GMO products is one of the few issues that unites all political parties here-- a rare feat. Following the meeting on September 4, Post will confirm that Hungary still has no plan to comment on September 7 and report any significant change. End comment.
LEVINE